

1931

Bringing Romance from Spain

Thelma Carlson
Iowa State College

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Recommended Citation

Carlson, Thelma (1931) "Bringing Romance from Spain," *The Iowa Homemaker*: Vol. 11 : No. 2 , Article 5.
Available at: <http://lib.dr.iastate.edu/homemaker/vol11/iss2/5>

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Bringing Romance from Spain...

By Thelma Carlson

BUILDING air castles in Spain is not a bit more interesting than planning a Spanish house for America. America is young yet and blood of our European ancestors is still flowing in our veins, so it is not at all strange that we should want our architecture even today to still bear evidence of European influence, although at the same time showing the individuality and sentiment of our people.

Although the ideas of Spain have been adapted to modern living conditions in various parts of this country giving results which are interesting, which are original and which afford a greater enjoyment in life generally, they have been a little overdone. Various roof lines and much decoration have made them too ornate. The Spanish house should show sincerity and honesty in design.

The Spanish house was first brought to Mexico and from there was taken to California, New Mexico, Texas and Florida. As these places were more or less isolated from each other at that time, it is not peculiar that each developed a local variety.

In California the monks had an unmistakable influence on the dominate architecture. But because of the scarcity of architects, and the presence of only the crudest of materials, there was an extreme simplification and almost utter loss of details. There developed therefore what might be termed as frugal, honest and craftsmanship-architecture.

The houses of Arizona took on a desert quality. The roofs became flat and declined to appear in the perspective.

In Mexico the Indian influence was felt greatly. In fact they became almost half Indian and half Spanish. The Indian ideas were carried out in the mass and outline.

Florida developed the tropical type which might be known as the "romantic" house of America. High walls of stone, festoons of Spanish moss, lolling, wind-blown palm trees, varicolored awnings, and wrought iron gates and grilles changed its appearance.

In the northern climate the houses were less spread out because of the extra cost to make the foundation reach the frost line. Here the chimney received a place of prominence because of its utilitarian importance.

The bright sunlight of Spain is one of the reasons why the Spaniards made small windows. Then, also they believed in the seclusion of women, and the construction of but a few small windows was one way of keeping women from being seen from the street. The Spanish house in America also has this distinctive feature.

Balconies were used in the old houses for protection. The Spaniards also had the belief that the iron bars absorbed the heat, so put them in the front of their windows to help keep out the heat of the sun. Now, these balconies are merely decorative.

Another characteristic of the Spanish house is the flat roof. This has been modified somewhat throughout America. In the more northern climate it was necessary to make the roof steeper to shed the snows.

The Spaniards, instead of building their garden around the house, built their house around the garden. This was known as a patio or inside living room. They were thought of as living from the outside in, while the American lives from

the inside out. One writer also mentions that the American habit of sitting on the porch could not be neglected, so the Americans did not surround their patios on all four sides. Often, however, you find them inclosed on three sides and rivaling the old patios in beauty.

The Spanish type of house actually seems to be born from the physical conditions of the surroundings. In this, color plays a very important part. The delicately shaded pinks and yellows set off with the red tile roofs blend with the surrounding colors.

Varying of floor levels is used to an advantage in this house. The efficiency of the Americans in room arrangement, and ingenuity in distribution of heating and plumbing apparatus have made a type of house with comforts nowhere else known.

So like every art that has ever lived, Spanish architecture has responded to the demands and absorbed the characteristics of the race and age that it serves.

When the Thermometer Goes Up

By Anafred Stephenson

DID you sit sweltering on a sticky mohair davenport, sipping iced lemonade and staring dejectedly at a living room done in warm browns and reds last summer?

Anticipating just such a hot, dry summer as last, many women are already scheming how to make their living rooms comfortable and inviting for that time. And it is a simple matter to entirely alter the aspect of a room by a few simple changes.

Let us begin with the overstuffed davenport and chairs. Covered with mohair, they present a very difficult problem—that of keeping them free from the fine dust and dirt that blow thru the open windows. Why not slip-cover them? There is something quite thrilling about seeing the former drab furniture dressed up in a new tailored covering of rep or denim in some soft color. A flounce, or "petticoat," of boxed plaits around the bottom gives a finishing touch that is quite pleasing.

Then there is the matter of drapes. The heavy silk or velvet ones that have adorned the windows all winter are too expensive to be swished out the window in the summer winds, yet people insist upon having every possible breeze. A very simple solution is to hang up some inexpensive, printed crash in gay, harmonizing colors, or perhaps some plain material such as Osnaberg would be more suitable. These need only to be laundered when they become soiled, and will look fresh and cool all summer long.

And isn't there some little furniture

knick-knack that can be painted? A little end table, a magazine rack, some hanging shelves, or a chair, when painted some bright but harmonizing color, will do wonders toward bringing color and gaiety into the room.

Then when everything is completed—the slip-covers, the drapes and the painted furniture—arrange it all and decide upon the pillows. Perhaps more color is still needed, so pillows of big bold prints are chosen. However, if printed drapes have previously been selected, then cushions of plain colors are more to be desired. Aside from color and design, they must be washable, and preferably cotton, so when the cool nights beckon, they can be carried out onto the lawn without harming them.

We know of one living room that is in the process of being rejuvenated for spring. The davenport and one large chair were slip-covered with a soft blue denim. Two other quaint shaped, small, stuffed chairs were slip-covered with a novelty-woven, striped linen with violet, green and yellow the predominating colors. Another was done in a plain russet colored material. This variety of color seemed to call for plain drapes, so natural colored Osnaberg was hung at the windows. The two sections of bookcases were painted black on the outside and lined with bright yellow. When the green, orange, red and violet books were arranged in groups, it presented a charming effect. A small table and an ash stand were painted a russet color similar to the

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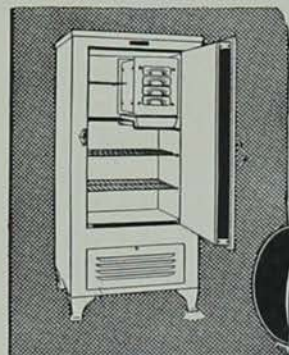
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Pots and Pans Are Fun

(Continued from page 3)

primary coat of a sort of cream colored base before receiving the final color coating. Then the girls dip the ware into baths of the colored enamel, or spray the substance on with "air brushes" or "guns." Each motion that they make in the operation is systematic and well-timed, and there is not one bit of wasted energy.

The vats of the enamel make such a colorful array, I couldn't help asking the guide if the introduction of color hadn't been effective in eliminating much of the monotony of the job. I should imagine that no one could help liking to work with such lovely stuff. He laughed and disillusioned me by saying that to the girls it was just a long day of hard work, and one or another was all the same to them.

After the pans are dipped they are hung on racks to dry and the racks are taken to the baking rooms. Here expert "bakers" operate the ovens. A great amount of skill and experience is needed in regulating the exact temperature and timing the baking process. These men take a great deal of pride in their work, since so much of the success of the product depends upon their performance.

The finishing process is the last, and the articles are polished, inspected carefully for any possible flaws, then wrapped, packed and shipped or booked for storage.

The plant employs a technical staff to conduct experimental investigations in testing the finished products and developing new ones for the market.

And so we see them in attractive displays on our department store tables, are enticed, fall, and carry them proudly home to complete our color scheme. And my little set of canary yellow mixing bowls goes on the shelf as one of my treasured possessions, along with a lustrous cream pitcher and a gay Checho-Slavakian plate.

The Thermometer Goes Up

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chair covering. Both printed and plain pillows were used, some blue-green and violet linen ones for the blue davenport, with two very attractive printed ones bringing out yellow and more green. As a last finishing touch, an interesting printed cotton textile was hung on the wall in a space formerly occupied by a heavier tapestry hanging, which was entirely out of place with the new array of color.